IT Unit 4

Topic 2

**Ch 5, Ethics & information systems** (Informatics, p 265-270)

1. Define ethics.

Ethics refer to behaving in ways that are based on our morals and accepted standards. These standards may be common in a particular society or specific to a single organisation.

1. What implications do they have for an organisations operations?

When ethics are being applied to the use of information systems within organisations, it is able to see general important areas affecting employers, employees and clients, or customers. These key areas are the responsibilities of employers and employees to each other and clients, codes of conduct, company computer-use policies, employee monitoring and free speech on the internet

1. Using video games as an example, illustrate how there are two competing principles.

In the debate of whether or not video games should be available for children to be able to play, one side of the argument is if children are being exposed to the violence and it may be better to protect them from the violence. However, on the other side, it is important to maintain the freedom of expression yet follow the guidelines regarding suggested ages of those playing the games

1. When does an ethical dilemma occur?

Where there is a concept of that there are two opposing sides there is an ethical dilemma

1. Freedom of expression is an illustration of an ethical dilemma. Explain why.

Freedom of expression can be seen as a censorship, most would acknowledge that there are limits with respect to privacy and fair comment but the question is just where do those limits lie? This is because it is important to limit the freedom which people have in terms of speech (as you do not want people on the streets spurting racist comments to everyone and claiming it as their freedom of speech) but it is unsure at what point does that freedom stop.

**Key areas in information systems relating to ethics:**

1. Workplace responsibilities:
   1. List some workplace responsibilities of both employers and employees.

In workplaces both the employees and employers have certain responsibilities towards one another as a duty of care. An employer must pay staff for the work they carry out and provide a suitable work environment in which that work can take place. The employee is expected to work in the interests of the organisation for the period of they are being paid.

1. Code of conduct
   1. What is a code of conduct and what is its purpose?

A code of conduct is set of conventional principles and expectations that is considered binding on any member of a particular group. The purpose of a code of conduct is where one party is given a right but has an expectation to uphold so they do not abuse that right.

1. Employee monitoring
   1. Explain how employee monitoring may be considered an ethical dilemma for an organisation.

Employee monitoring can be an ethical dilemma for an organisation as it allows employers to ensure that their workers are doing what they are supposed to do, but it may also be an infringement of privacy if they can be monitored at any given moment without consent being given.

* 1. List the advantages and disadvantages of employee monitoring.

Advantages include allowing the employees to be able to check that the employers are doing what they’re paid to do, it saves time and money, it will be able allow the employee to be sure that data entry operators are performing to the high standard of keystrokes that they are required to work at, it will allow employees to know whether or not the internet is being misused, and it will make the employers less likely to slack off or do things that aren’t work related if they are aware that they are being watched.

Disadvantages may be that employers may begin to feel stressed with knowing that their movements are being ‘spied’ on, it may create mistrust between supervisors and staff and it may be seen as an infringement of privacy,

1. Ethics and the internet
   1. What is the role of Netiquette guidelines?

Netiquette guidelines means the network etiquette. It refers to the conventions of politeness observed in internet communication.

1. Resolving legal and ethical tensions
   1. Why is it important that an organisation resolves ethical issues quickly and effectively?

It is important that an organisation resolves ethical issues quickly and effectively as if not resolved, it may disrupt the work being done more and it could also result in disciplinary actions for the employee.

1. Outline the six steps involved in solving ethical dilemmas.
2. **Identify the problem:** What decision has to be made and what facts are required?
3. **Identify the stakeholders:** Who are they? What interests do they have? Who is the key player?
4. **Identify possible consequences:** What options are available? What are the likely consequences?
5. **Identify ethical standards:** Are there any applicable laws? Are there any codes of conduct of standards that could be applied? Is there a precedent?
6. **Evaluate options:** Identify strengths and weaknesses. Identify the option that causes least harm. Can the decision be reversed?
7. **Make a decision:** Select the preferred option. Justify the option.